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# Advocate of Peace.

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## What King Edward and Emperor William Might Have Done.

Emperor William of Germany, after a month's sojourn in England, left for home December 11. On departing he expressed the hope that his visit might have contributed to foster friendly feeling between Great Britain and Germany. In many conversations with members of his entourage he laid much emphasis upon the necessity of friendship between the two countries. "We cannot afford to quarrel," he said. "I hope I have made it clear that my feeling toward England is one of affection."

In these and similar utterances, both in public speeches and in private conversations, the Emperor tried to convince the English people that he and his country were not only not desirous of picking a quarrel with Great Britain, but sincerely hoped that their peaceful relations might never be broken. There is no doubt that he was entirely sincere in these expressions. Nobody accuses William the Second of duplicity of speech.

It is to be hoped that the *Times*, and other English journals, which have been systematically nagging Germany of late, may be stirred to some sense of shame and self-respect by these frank and manly words of the Kaiser. It required no little self-possession and genuine courage in him, as well as an unusual desire for peace, to declare himself as he did, when he must have had burning in his soul the reproaches and maledictions of a certain section of

the English press, which had been daily belched forth up to the very moment when he arrived in London. If he had not known something of the irresponsibility of the press as exemplified by certain sheets in his own country, he probably would never have gone to England at all.

Not all of the British journals, to be sure, have followed the lead of the *Times*. There are a few, like the *Manchester Guardian* and the *London Tribune*, which have spoken steadily with genuine respect and appreciation of Germany, and have pleaded in the strongest terms for a true *entente cordiale* between the two nations. It is probably literally true, as Sir William Randal Cremer has declared, that if the press of the two countries could be muzzled for six months, all the bad feeling between them would disappear.

King Edward's conduct during Emperor William's visit, like that of the people in general, was just as noble and sincere on his part as that of the Kaiser on his. He showed himself again the true Peacemaker. Of this the German Emperor must have gone away absolutely assured, and he probably saw beneath the surface that a large majority of intelligent Englishmen had no sympathy with the base insinuations and mischief-making fulminations of the *Times* and its supporters.

But whatever important abatement of the bad feeling between the two countries may have been brought about by the personal relations, the public utterances and the praiseworthy conduct of the two rulers, the real cause of the difficulty has been left untouched; and so long as no attempt is made to remove this cause, both Kaiser and King will have preached practically in vain good feeling and trustful relations. The Kaiser back in Germany will urge on with all his personal magnetism the increase of the German navy. King Edward's government, on its side, will continue to lay down the keels of new Dreadnaughts, and thus naval rivalry, with the suspicions and alarms inevitably growing out of it, will quickly wipe out practically all of the good effects of the royal visits and speeches.

The mischief-making newspapers in the two countries, concentrating in themselves the popular distrust and fear engendered by the rivalry in naval extension, and seasoning these with their own greed of gain, will continue to talk mysteriously of "invasions" and "surprises" and the "smashing of fleets," and by their tirades of suspicion and abuse will keep

the two peoples in constant unrest and alarm. This is the pity and the mischief of the situation. Unless something can be done speedily for the removal of this cause of recrimination and friction, what hindered the Hague Conference from doing more than it did in some important directions will continue, and the strain between these two great powers will grow worse and worse, in spite of the mutual affection of the rulers.

The conduct of the two rulers, when they were together, was admirable as far as it went, but it was entirely too superficial. The regrettable thing is that to neither of them does it seem to have occurred that it lay in their power to take the initiative in a step which would have rendered to the cause of peace between their countries and throughout the world an infinitely greater service than that of fine speeches and noble official and personal behavior. If Emperor William, for instance, had said to King Edward: "This rivalry of armaments has gone far enough, and I shall be glad to coöperate and to induce my government to coöperate with your Majesty's government in putting an end to it," he might that day have set in motion a current which would have speedily relieved, not Germany and England only, but the whole body of the nations of the curse of military and naval rivalry, which still disturbs and poisons to a greater or less degree all the sources of international friendship and confidence. Why should not one of these "great kings" have seen this golden opportunity?

### **The Mischief of the Big Battle Fleet Cruise.**

The sailing of the fleet of sixteen big battleships for the Pacific has given rise to a great variety of comment. Many persons have looked upon it as nothing more than a somewhat exceptional practice cruise. Some have criticised it as essentially spectacular, as involving a useless waste of money, and as a performance of no essential value, even from the naval point of view. Others have seen in it evidence of an adroit scheme to boom the navy and to secure for it support not likely to come if the ordinary naval routine were preserved. The majority of those who have spoken have commended, or even gloried in, the cruise as a necessary exhibition to the other maritime powers, and particularly to Japan, of our great and rapidly growing naval strength, and as a timely warning to them not to meddle with us from the sea. The sensational papers, which are at the bottom of nearly every bit of international trouble, have made great capital out of it.

From one point of view, the naval cruise performance hardly deserves attention. If our own country only were concerned, it would make very little difference whether our fleet were on the Atlantic or the Pacific coast, or half on one side and half on the

other; whether it went round the Horn, or cruised up and down the Eastern Coast, or made a trip into the Mediterranean. Any reference of the cruise to a special impression to be made upon Japan may also be eliminated from consideration. The declarations of the government on this point are explicit, and we dislike to believe them insincere.

But notwithstanding these reserves, the cruise of this great battle fleet, as the President fondly calls it, seems to us to be extremely unfortunate and fraught with immense mischief. It is perfectly clear what the purpose of the government was in dispatching it. If we are to interpret this purpose by the repeated utterances of the President and the Navy Department about the necessity of a large and efficient navy in the interests both of our own security and of the peace of the world, this cruise was intended, not only to give the combined fleet practice and thus to increase its efficiency, but also to create among the people of the country a deeper interest in the navy and a warmer enthusiasm for its further enlargement according to the Administration's policy. Enlistments for the navy have been very slow and the department doubtless believed that this exhibition would increase the patriotic zeal of a considerable number of young men and induce them to take service with the navy. Nothing could have been more cunningly devised to excite the imaginations of the masses, kindle their fighting patriotism, intensify their fear of imaginary foreign foes, make them feel that a big fleet is absolutely necessary to our safety, and secure their support for immense naval budgets in Congress,—nothing could have been more cunningly devised for all this than this extraordinary and spectacular cruise.

But great as is the mischief that it will work in this direction, in dazzling the people and keeping them blind to the folly and wickedness of limitless naval expansion by our country, the evil effect in another direction will be still greater. The President naïvely supposes, if his utterances are to be taken at their face value, that the other powers will be awed by this naval display into respect for us, and thus the peace of the world be better assured. What will actually happen is that most of the great naval powers will be aroused by the example, or goaded on by a lurking fear of what may be our purposes, to add immediately to its own naval equipment and to try to outdo us in power on the sea. Great Britain, Germany and Japan are not the sort of folk to be stupefied by this display and driven from the field of rivalry. On the contrary, they will all take up the challenge and the cruise will hardly be ended before more huge ships, in addition to the latest recommended by the President, will be urged upon Congress, that we may keep pace with the naval programs of the other powers, which our own folly and extravagance have induced them to form. In this way this great cruise